We would respectfully direct the attention of our Country Subscribers to the mode we have adopted of signifying to them, when the period of their subscriptions expire, and when they become due—the substitution of a BLUE *envelope to their paper instead of one of the ordinary nature.*

THE BUILDER,

NO. XVII.

SATURDAY, JUNE 3, 1843.

Our paper has had little said for it of late; and we have meanwhile forborne to call attention to ourselves in any wise farther than the quiet performance of our duty seemed to warrant. We have watched the steady progress of its course, and listened to opinions, until we think we are justified in assuming this to be one of those points at which we may venture on a summary or digest, for the edification of our readers or for their amusement, as well as for some general reflections of our own.

We have not yet reached the point which our good friends in "*the Row*" assigned for our fatal climax, but we have passed over that which some of our class, some of our friends within the camp, predicted would be the period of our decease. Certain workmen, calculating with all the indifference to our fate which they would as to the wearing out of a tool or the burning of a candle, were so precise as to fix a sixteen weeks' existence for THE BUILDER. The sixteen weeks are just passed, and four more remain to carry it to the point at which the bookseller fraternity had doomed it. We are compelled to go on with a stoical indifference, even with this prediction hanging over our heads, and to await that period for the issue of imprisoned succour, which we may deem to be held in, or pent up, in denial to us.

And now we may give an account, in our usual candour, as to the way in which we have made progress in our new adventure. That it was difficult, and it would seem unexpected, we may judge from the speculations as to its continuance; and we put those speculations more to the account of a spirit of keen judging as to the general probabilities, than to any personal or particular indifference or objection to the work itself; indeed, it would be ungrateful in us to suffer a misunderstanding to exist as to our meaning on this score. But we have it to confess, that the work has taken a different turn to that which we calculated on, at least in some degree. Architects, master builders, and the higher class of the trades have supported us more liberally even than we had dared to presume upon; but the workmen have in the same ratio stood aloof. It is true that there are many reasons to account for this. We have not had those opportunities that we sought and still languish for, to render the journal of that sterling interest to them which they have a right to look for; but one means that we relied in some measure upon, was their own co-operation. If the workmen, or any body of men, wish for benefits to result to them, they must put out a hand of their own to the planting before they can expect to reap. We are well inclined to think that we have done our parts in a tolerable proportion, and should dislike it the worse if we could say as much for this particular section of our friends.

It is true that the times have been far from favourable in themselves, and that a great deal remains to be done to influence their general circumstances, so as to assure to the workman a condition wherein matter of reflection and study should be plainly appropriate and welcome to him. There is a system, and particularly about large towns and in large works, that, for some cause or other, seems to deny to the workman the very advantages which it would be supposed were placed within his reach. Building, like too many other things, has become a matter so *refined* by the competition principle, that almost all the high considerations of mind and its privileges have been excluded from our calculations; and cheap work has been more sought after than cheap comforts, and cheaply obtained competencies, with their moralities and decencies. Hence the workman and his master have been far—too far removed from contact, and from the occasion of cultivating sympathies; and a system has grown upon us of gauging and squaring for gain, that, like all other similar principles pushed to extremes of action, has destroyed the very object aimed at. We could prove our case by a hundred references, but we suspect there will be none to challenge us to any such necessity. Workmen under this system feel too much of the imposition of toil and the severities and monotony of the division of labour; they have been rendered too much like machines, and dealt with as such; and the result has been, that so far from many of them wishing to apply to the study of any general science bearing upon their calling, they are too glad to get through a day's work in which they play a part so little, apparently to them, in reference to any great design or object: there appears little to invite them to, and little to promise of, advancement. This state of things is inimical to the well-being, if not to the security, of the commonalty, and we shall take occasion to shew how and why we arrive at our conclusions. We have the means of remedy in hand, and we shall do our best to exhort to the use of them—for which we must crave a future patient and indulgent attention.

In last week's paper a small paragraph was inserted in the hurry of going to press, referring to a letter we had just received from the solicitor of Sir R. Morrison, Architect, of Dublin, complaining of alleged libellous matter in the letter signed "Caretto," in the 11th number of this journal. Our correspondent was an anonymous one, and we had some hesitation as to inserting his letter at all, but wishing to correct a spirit, that we considered unbecoming of the subject treated on, as well as of all those who apply themselves to the discussion of matters pertaining to a distinguished art, we seized the occasion to deliver ourselves of the views which that letter suggested, and as we should think, in a manner perfectly to acquit us of any intention to wound the feelings of any man, and not only to acquit us of intention, but to guard us against the suspicion of any such thing. We believe Sir R. Morrison must be aware of this; but this does not satisfy us. However innocuous the slander (for slander we must and do firmly believe it to be), and however much more so we may have rendered it by our remarks. We must now call upon our correspondent to shew himself worthy of the pains we took in reference to his letter, and of the respect we paid him by our honest dealing with it, to shew himself also worthy of the class of which he is a member. We call upon him to avow himself at once, in such a way as to meet like a man the charge that is preferred against him, and if he has committed a wrong, to make an honest man's reparation for it. This is the only way in which he can acquire a solid satisfaction to his own conscience in this business, to say nothing of the good he may effect by example to others, and by letting it be seen that all of the building class are far removed from assassins, who stab in the dark—or with those, equally wicked, who tamper with the reputations of their brethren.

NATIONAL EDUCATION.

Two lectures on the above highly interesting and important subject, have recently been delivered at the Marylebone Literary and Scientific Institution, by Mr. Bell, professor of elocution. The lecturer began by urging the necessity that existed for a comprehensive system of national education, especially among the poorer classes of society. The higher and middle classes can afford to have their children educated, and they generally are so, as a matter of prudent economy, that they may be properly and legally qualified for the lucrative professions, but the poorer classes, who are infinitely the most numerous in the community, are thrown, as it were, upon the wide waste of the world—the dreary gloomy wilderness of poverty, from which they seldom find a pathway into the better land of prosperity. After referring to the statistics lately furnished by Lord Ashley in his recent speech in the House of Commons, where his lord-ship proves the great dearth of religious, moral, and intellectual education among the working classes of this country, the lecturer proceeded to observe, that were the people well educated, they would, with few exceptions, be virtuous and honest, consequently the multitudinous penal functionaries would be unnecessary. To restrain and punish crime we have our judges, magistrates, police force, gaols, and all the costly apparatus for rendering effective our penal enactments, and yet the diminution of crime has not been the consequence of this costly and complicated establishment. With all this restraining and penal force, perambulating and pervading every part of the United Kingdom, the amount of crime increases every year. Our prisons are kept crowded by the steady influx of offenders, and shoals after shoals of convicted depredators are dragged from our shores to expiate their delinquencies in distant lands, and in the most degraded slavery. The lecturer contended that the very humblest classes should be taught to read, understand, and write our common language. Reading and writing, a short system of accounts, grammar, and geography, are indispensable branches of education in the business of life, and every child in these kingdoms ought to be instructed in them. The elements of every branch of education can be much simplified, the letters and principles of the sounds of our language can be put into a small compass, and that with great advantage to the learner. A *First Book* for the elements of reading will not cost more than twopence, a *Second Book* may consist of a collection of select sentences, fables, and little tales; the expense of this will not exceed sixpence. The transition from this to the Old and New Testament is not difficult. A copy of the Bible can be purchased for two shillings. Epitomes of grammar, geography, and arithmetic may be prepared and sold for sixpence each. A collection of extracts from our national history, natural history, &c., could be prepared for 3*s.* 6*d.* each copy. An abridgment of an English dictionary would not cost more than a shilling. Maps and globes, though expensive at first, would form a part of the furniture of a National School. Thus then, at an expense of less than eight shillings, a set of useful books could be provided for a child at a national school. These books, with a little care, may last a child during the whole course of his education. The lecturer proposed that the schools should be conducted on the principle of simultaneous action, a system of instruction which he had the honour to arrange, and which he had practised for many years. This system would enable a master, by his individual exertions during four or five hours each day, to instruct three or four hundred children in all the

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